

NMRA BULLETIN

HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR ADDRESS OR OTHER MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION?

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2026 NMRA NATIONAL CONVENTION DATES AND NATIONAL TRAIN SHOW RESERVATIONS:

Scenic City Express

July 27-August 2, 2026
Chattanooga, Tennessee
www.nmra2026.org

Train Show Booth Reservations

Jenny Hendricks Registrar
P.O. Box 1328 Soddy Daisy, TN 37384-1328
423-892-2846 ntsreg@nmra.org

Future Convention Locations

2027: Tacoma, Washington
2028: Rochester, New York

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

NMRA AP CERTIFICATE REPORT

MAY 2026

GOLDEN SPIKE

Australasian Region

Tony Clark
(Blackstone, Queensland,
Australia)

Mid-Central Region

David E. Mertz, Sr,
(Louisville, Kentucky)

Myron Krajewski
(Parma, Ohio)

Mid-Eastern Region

Gary Friedhaber,
(Toado, Virginia)

Pacific Northwest Region

Gary Huber
(Coeur d'Alene, Idaho)

Philip Sellinger
(Portland, Oregon)

Pacific Southwest Region

Michael Dayton
(Goodyear, Arizona)

MASTER BUILDER (MOTIVE POWER)

None this month

MASTER BUILDER (CARS)

Mid-Eastern Region

William Lyders
(Gainesville, Virginia)

MASTER BUILDER (SCENERY)

Mid-Continent Region

Robert D. Miller
(Festus, Missouri)

MASTER BUILDER (STRUCTURES)

Mid-Eastern Region

Jeffrey Jordan
(Fort Valley, Virginia)

Pacific Northwest Region

Duane Cookson
(Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada)

Dennis Terpstra
(Shoreline, Washington)

Pacific Southwest Region

Paul Buhrke
(Tucson, Arizona)

MASTER BUILDER (PROTOTYPE MODELS)

Mid-Central Region

Paul Downs
(Louisville, Kentucky)

Pacific Southwest Region

Wayne L. Pierce
(El Cajon, California)

MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER (CIVIL)

Lone Star Region

C. Randall Wilson
(Kingwood, Texas)

Pacific Northwest Region

Bill Smienk
(Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada)

Lee Calkins
(Post Falls, Idaho)

Brian Orysen
(Roseburg, Oregon)

MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER (ELECTRICAL)

Mid-Eastern Region

Kevin O'Connor
(Cary, North Carolina)

Mid-Continent Region

Fred Wilke
(St. Charles, Missouri)

Pacific Southwest Region

Chris Thompson
(Mesa, Arizona)

Southeastern Region

James Travis
(Cartersville, Georgia)

CHIEF DISPATCHER

Mid-Eastern Region

Dick Bronson
(Waxhaw, North Carolina)

Jim Thomas
(Fort Mill, South Carolina)

Northeastern Region

Richard Sisson
(Portsmouth, Rhode Island)

Pacific Northwest Region

Bill Smienk
(Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada)

Pacific Southwest Region

Jack Debold
(Tucson, Arizona)

ASSOCIATION OFFICIAL

Australasian Region

Philip Sharp
(Auckland, , New Zealand)

Lone Star Region

Steve Sandifer
(Meadows Place, Texas)

Mid-Eastern Region

Ernest H. Little
(Manassas, Virginia)

Southeastern Region

Gerald Mabry
(Meridian, Mississippi)

ASSOCIATION VOLUNTEER

Mid-Eastern Region

Kenneth L. Wilson
(Warrenton, Virginia)

Niagara Frontier Region

Ronald Johnson
(Hamilton, Ontario, Canada)

Pacific Southwest Region

Linda Petrarca
(Goodyear, Arizona)

Rocky Mountain Region

Wayne Kennedy
(Whitewater, Colorado)

MODEL RAILROAD AUTHOR

Mid-Eastern Region

Steve Jackson
(Fairfax, Virginia)

Pacific Southwest Region

Chris Thompson
(Mesa, Arizona)

Rocky Mountain Region

Tony Hammes
(El Paso, Texas)

MASTER MODEL RAILROADER

Lone Star Region

C. Randall Wilson, MMR #824
(Kingwood, Texas)

Pacific Coast Region

Richard Mossholder, MMR # 822
(Santa Rosa, California)

Pacific Northwest Region

Bill Smienk, MMR # 823
(Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada)

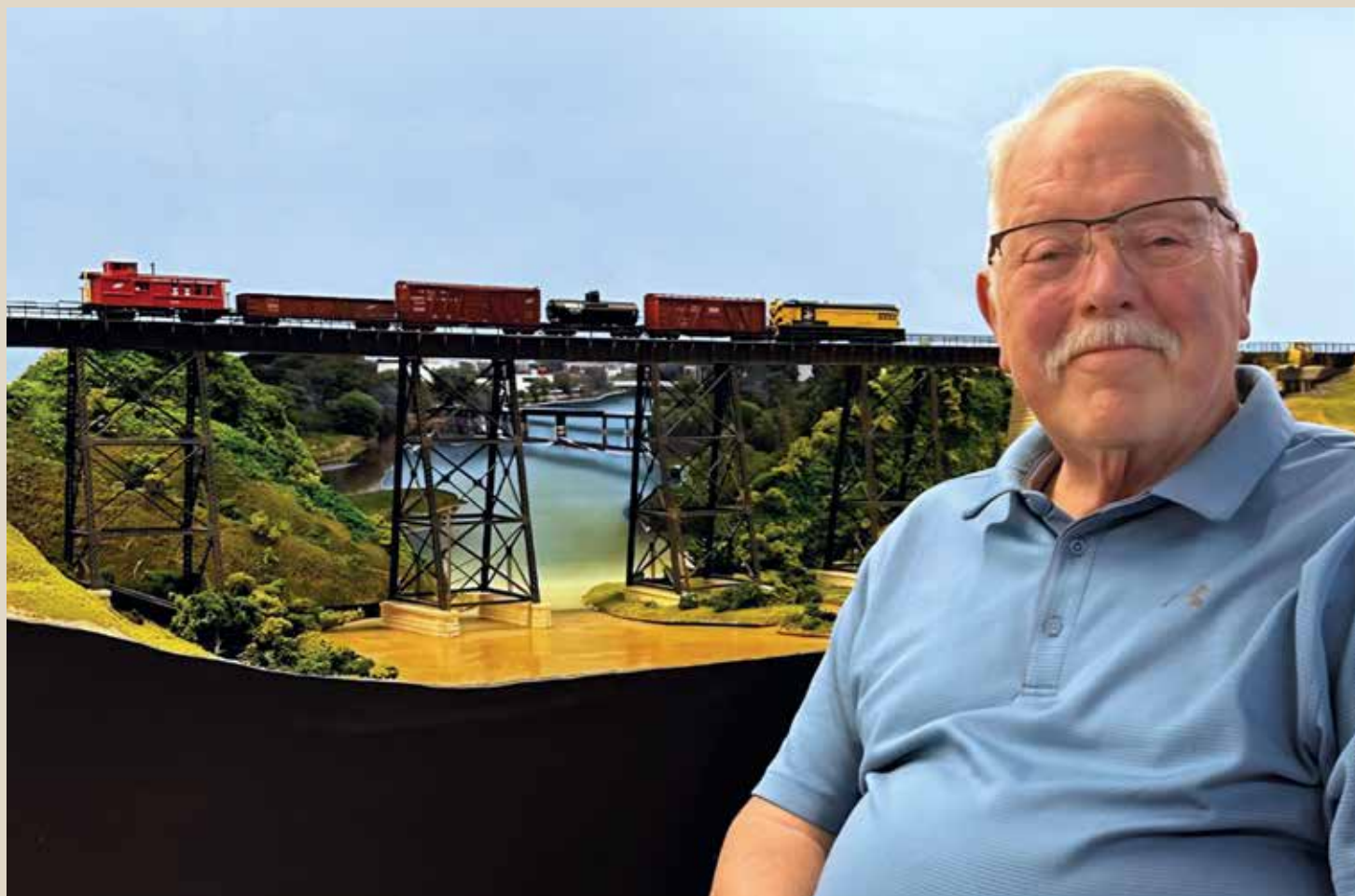
Pacific Southwest Region

Wayne L. Pierce, MMR #825
(El Cajon, California)

AP QUESTIONS: If you have questions about the AP program or requirements, start with your local or Region AP manager. If you still have questions, contact Ray Persing at achiev@nmra.org.

MMR EARNED

RICH HANKE (“TEACH”), MMR



I joined the NMRA in 1960. I was in high school at the time. My friend and fellow modeler, Bob Strand, suggested that I join. The dues at that time were \$5 a year; that was money well spent. I have been a member ever since..

Bob and I would ride our bikes to the many railroad locations around Park Ridge, such as the Chicago & North Western (C&NW) Deval Tower. The tower operator was very hospitable. He would let us throw the interlocking levers and would explain the operation. I was lucky to railfan at a time when young enthusiasts were not chased away by officials.

My grandfather also encouraged me by taking me to the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy ticket office in downtown Chicago to purchase tickets for the “Sunday Only” steam fan trips 5632 and 4960. I returned home after the fan trip, smiling ear to ear, with a black, sooty face.

I began my love of modeling with the clinics put on by the local NMRA clubs and events. The layout tours were a wonderful experience. The “old heads” I met at the NMRA meets were enlightening and eager to share with the young modelers. I attended the Park Ridge and Des Plaines

Valley Model Railroad clubs and an outstanding event at Elliott Donnelley’s live-steam railroad in Libertyville, Illinois. These established my love and lifelong excitement of the hobby.

The Illini Railroad Club ran several trips to the Colorado narrow gauge country. My grandfather helped subsidize my ticket for one of the Denver & Rio Grande Western fan trips, much to my parents’ dismay, since I was only 15 at the time. I got to ride in the cab of several locomotives on several Illini steam trips. The engineers would say to me, “Hey, kid, do you

MIDWEST REGION: WINNEBAGO LAND DIVISION

MMR: #810

CERTIFICATES EARNED

Rich Hanke, "Teach", MMR® #810

- Master Builder – Motive Power
- Master Builder – Structures
- Master Builder – Scenery
- Model Railroad Engineer – Civil
- Association Official
- Association Volunteer
- Model Railroad Author

want to ride in the locomotive cab?"
Wow, times sure have changed!

My college years were good for my railroad career. I needed money for my college tuition. I was fortunate to land work on the C&NW for several summers, which helped pay for my schooling. The first summer I spent changing ties on the C&NW commuter line between Deval Tower and Mayfair, in suburban Chicago

My first foreman, "Tom," said,
"There are two things to always remember: how to swing a spike maul; and don't work too hard, you will wreck it for the old guys."

I later transferred to the Operating Department in downtown Chicago at 400 West Madison Street. That experience opened doors to several other railroad opportunities, including the Green Bay & Western (GB&W), Brillion & Forest Junction (B&FJ), Fox River Valley Railroad (FRVR), and the Wisconsin Central (WC). I became a good friend of Dave Lockwood, an outstanding modeler and general manager of the B&FJ. After college, I was hired as a conductor. I worked on the WC for several years and became good friends with Bruce Rogers, a WC locomotive engineer from New Zealand.

Even though I spent many years working for the railroad, my main career was as an elementary school teacher for the Manitowoc Public School District. The railroad frequently called me after school to work a train. I told my family and friends that I worked "eight days a week"— having

worked Monday through Friday as a teacher, then Friday through Sunday as a conductor. I earned the nickname "Teach" when I worked on the railroad.

I model the C&NW in my basement in Manitowoc, Wisconsin. My layout is 45x28 feet and meanders around the basement. The track is Code 70, and the structures are scratchbuilt, modeled after the many businesses that were served by the C&NW along the Lake Michigan shoreline over the years since 1872, when the Milwaukee Lakeshore & Western (ML&W) was first built. I love the history I have gleaned from local history buffs.

I know some fellow modelers who attained their Master Model Railroader designation. I was intrigued by the challenge and the skills they acquired while completing their seven chosen certificates. In 1995, I realized I had already met all the requirements for Model Railroad Author, Association Volunteer, and Association Official. I completed all the paperwork and started looking into the other certificate categories. It was a challenge, but well worth the time and effort. Each category taught me many important skills I would not have pursued had I not committed to the challenge.

Model railroading is one of the greatest hobbies. It includes such a wide variety of skills and demands. I am fortunate to have accumulated a cadre of friends who have helped and encouraged me over the years. I am thrilled and honored to have reached my goal and to be in the great company of others who have also received their MMR.

MMR EARNED

BRUCE ROBINSON, MMR



Richard Lord Photo

I was a sailor, not a model railroader. I grew up with my dad's interest in sailboats. First, he built a Sabot, an 8-foot sailing pram, which I learned to sail. Many hours were spent sailing around the harbor in Beverly, Massachusetts, while waiting for Dad to complete building the 28-foot Heroshoff ketch that was to become most of my world. During this time, many ship models were built. Then, in 1958, two events collided. The Heroshoff was launched, and Santa left a Marx train set under the Christmas tree. The result was that, as we cruised the New England coast, I brought along copies of *Model Railroader* magazine. While learning to navigate, I was also learning to lay track. Living an hour from the coast today, I still have the opportunity to stand on a rock and

gaze out to sea from time to time. Sea water will always be in the veins.

The first layout I built was a 4x8 with a 3x6 ell, built with Marx tubular track, which soon gave way to brass-rail flex track on fiber ties. Many hours were spent in the basement, between work sessions on the boat and summer cruises, learning how to become a model railroader. Then life got in the way, and it was off to see the world to places that the Pentagon chose. But my modeling continued because I took an Ambroid wood kit of a Boston & Maine baggage car with me. That car runs on the Valley Junction Railroad today and has racked up miles from Massachusetts to Japan to Mississippi to New Hampshire (must be some kind of record for

an HO-scale model). Then, in 1988, a suitable basement was secured with a house on top, and the design of the present VJRR was begun. Five years of construction later, the first operating session was held, and the railroad has hosted crews since. The op session held as part of the HUB Division's "HUB High Green" event on May 2, 2026, was op session number 385.

I joined the NMRA while stationed in Biloxi in 1969 and became NMRA member No. 2114. I passed the 50-year mark in 2019 and am still moving forward. This has been a very rewarding trip!

I met my mentor, the late Bill Borrelli, in Lawrence, Massachusetts, in 1970. Bill showed us a new and exciting

NORTHEASTERN REGION: HUB DIVISION

MMR: #821

CERTIFICATES EARNED Bruce Robinson, MMR® #821

- Master Builder – Cars
- Master Builder – Scenery
- Model Railroad Engineer – Civil
- Model Railroad Engineer – Electrical
- Chief Dispatcher
- Association Official
- Association Volunteer
- Model Railroad Author

way to pursue the hobby of model railroading. I joined the round-robin op group at the time and, for 20 years, enjoyed operating layouts with an inspiring group of modelers. Bill was a true showman and led us into promoting the hobby in new ways.

The Lawrence Model Railroad Club was formed, and I was elected club president. Then we started building a new hobby show we called Train Fair, which we ran for three years to show how a show could be improved, and turning it over to three groups that would carry on the ideas we created. I co-chaired the last show, Train Fair '79, which hosted 2,300 visitors. Proceeds from the Train Fair e show were donated to the NMRA Building Fund.

The next event to be created with Bill was RailRun, an op-til-you-drop weekend complete with a Saturday night banquet. Then we created "Tour de Chooch" in 1994, a Thanksgiving weekend open house featuring host layouts in New Hampshire and Massachusetts. TdeC is still very active and runs every year. With the Tour's 30-year anniversary and 30 host layouts open, New Hampshire Chronicle aired a 12-minute spot on WMUR-TV in 2024.

Being a member of the NMRA, but solo, I was aware of the Achievement Program, but thought (stop me if you have heard this before!) there was no way I could pursue this. I viewed the stopper as earning any of the required Service-to-the-Hobby awards. Then I met another mentor, Rich Breton, who asked me to join the local Division as a Director on the Board. That was January 2007. Now, follow along with me: In January 2008, I was in Galveston, Texas, touring the battleship *USS Texas*. The BoD was meeting, nominating, and then electing the new Division president. I figure it was about the same time I got to the battleship's boiler room that the votes were counted and the new president was elected. I returned home a few days later to be told I was the new president. The moral here is, don't leave town if there is an open position to be filled!

Now the complexion of the issue has changed, and I was on my way to work on other AP certificates. Some were easy for me to complete, as there was a basement-sized layout under construction at that time, and others required a pivot to address new challenges. In the end, all were worth the trip.

A lot of time has been invested in promoting the NMRA by manning displays at numerous shows, community events, local nursing homes, and statewide and local TV appearances. For six years, I put together monthly Division Railfun events, creating a couple of zillion PowerPoint presentations covering how-to-do subjects and purely entertaining offerings. I have presented clinics at four Divisions in New England and several NER conventions.

Fifteen years serving in Scouting (Woodbadge-three beads) yielded several scouts earning their

Railroading merit badges, and young people in the Youth in Model Railroading program made several trips to operate on the VJRR.

The Valley Junction Railroad construction began in 1989 and was completed enough to begin operations in 1995. The track plan is a point-to-point design set in New Hampshire in 1960. Interchange on the east end is with the Boston & Maine and on the west end with the Central Vermont. Track is weathered Code 83 hand-laid, originally controlled by MRC walk-around DC throttles, later replaced with NCE DCC. Turnout control on mainline turnouts is via the dispatcher's panel, with all local turnouts controlled with ground throws.

Crew size is eight operators using a dispatcher, two yard masters, a branch line operator, and four mainline crews. Train control is governed by a 6:1 fast clock and a schedule with waybills used to route freight cars. Regular crew operators' service times range from 10 to over 25 years. New operators are placed in an apprenticeship program in which they operate twice in each position before qualifying for the dispatcher's desk. Currently, the VJRR is hosting seven members from two Divisions who are working on their Chief Dispatcher certificate.

Since my journey began in 1970 and reached this milestone in 2026, I have had so much to be thankful for, including lifelong friends along the way. What I have found regarding my associations within the NMRA is a family of terrific modelers willing to "share the fun of model railroading" at any time. I would like to name each one who has contributed so much to my journey, but the editor would have to publish a second section of this magazine. To achieve this lofty recognition is both humbling and rewarding.

NOTICE OF 2027 ELECTIONS

Mike Cummings, NMRA Secretary

We invite all members in good standing to consider running for an NMRA position that is opening during the 2027 election cycle.

The following NMRA Board of Directors positions are open for election in 2027:

1. President
2. Vice President
3. At-Large North American Director
4. Eastern District Director
5. Pacific District Director

THINKING OF RUNNING FOR AN NMRA DIRECTOR OR OFFICER POSITION?

For information about the process, there are some guidelines on

the NMRA web site that should be helpful

Click "Organization and Structure" from the NMRA Resources section in the blue "footer" on each page.

Click "Board of Directors" listed in the blue "box" on the right side of the page.

Click "Thinking about running for an NMRA office"

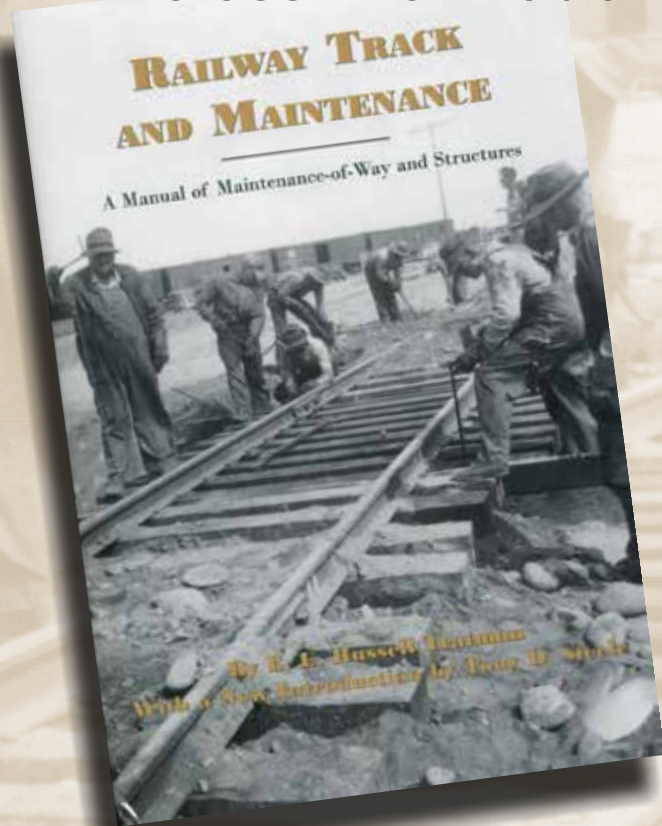
Submission of candidates' names for consideration for any of these positions shall be submitted to the National Nominating Committee Chair at nominations@nmra.org. The nominations chair will provide

an information form to complete and candidates will submit a statement which will be used on the ballots.

Candidates may wish to run for these positions by petition and not be subjected to the decisions of the appropriate nominating committees. Requirements for submitting by petition are contained in the CPPM. All submissions by petition shall be received by the NMRA Secretary at secy@nmra.org no later than September 15, 2026.

Members with questions about the election may contact the NMRA Secretary at secy@nmra.org.

Timeless information, now in its third printing!



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First published in 1897 as Railway Track and Trackwork, the 1926 Fourth Edition of this classic MOW guide is back!

- A wealth of prototype information!
- A timeless guide for modelers of all eras
- Dozens of detailed illustrations, cross-sections, and engineering diagrams
- Contemporary introduction to this classic by noted modeler Tony Steele
- Printed on high quality, glossy stock
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- Same low price as the 2003 reprint!

\$36

NMRA Members

Plus shipping & handling. Dealer inquiries welcome

\$50

Non-NMRA Members

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- phone 423 892 2846 fax 423 899 4869
- U.S. shipping & handling \$5.95 call for outside of US
- TN residents add 9.25% sales tax. US funds only.
- Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and Discover

NMRA

Your portal to more fun in the model rail community